

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JANUARY 25, 2010

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JANUARY 13, 2010

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 28, 2009

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 2, 2009

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009–10 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 963

Introduced by Assembly Member Ammiano

February 26, 2009

An act to add Section 14012.6 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 963, as amended, Ammiano. Public–~~Social~~ *social* services: renewal and recertification of eligibility.

Existing law creates various programs to provide health care services to persons who have limited incomes and meet various eligibility requirements, including, but not limited to, the Medi-Cal program, which is administered by the State Department of Health Care Services, and under which qualified low-income individuals receive health care benefits. Existing law also provides for the Food Stamp Program, under which food stamps are allocated by each county in accordance with federal requirements, and the CalWORKs program, under which each county provides cash assistance and other benefits to qualified low-income families and individuals who meet specified eligibility criteria. Under existing law, the Food Stamp Program and the CalWORKs program are administered at the state level by the State Department of Social Services.

Existing law requires recipients of Medi-Cal, Food Stamp, and CalWORKs benefits to, on a specified basis, renew or recertify their eligibility.

This bill would require the State Department of Health Care Services, in consultation with counties, the State Department of Social Services, representatives of the Statewide Automated Welfare System (SAWS) consortia, consumers, and other affected stakeholder groups to conduct a stakeholder planning workgroup to develop a joint renewal and recertification form to be used by individuals and families who are recipients of one or more of the Medi-Cal, Food Stamp, or CalWORKs benefit programs. This bill would require the stakeholder planning workgroup to develop the renewal and recertification form, and any related policies and procedures, ~~no later than July 1, 2011. By modifying the Medi-Cal, Food Stamp, and CalWORKs eligibility renewal and recertification processes, this bill would increase the responsibilities of the counties in the administration of the Medi-Cal, Food Stamp, and CalWORKs programs, thereby imposing a state-mandated local program to be considered for adoption by the department and other entities.~~

~~This bill would require the department to implement this measure by all-county letters or similar instructions on or before January 1, 2012. After implementation by all-county letters or similar instructions, the department would be required to adopt comprehensive implementing regulations, as specified, on or before July 1, 2012.~~

~~The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.~~

~~This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: ~~yes~~-no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 14012.6 is added to the Welfare and
- 2 Institutions Code, to read:
- 3 14012.6. (a) The department, in consultation with counties,
- 4 the State Department of Social Services, representatives of the
- 5 Statewide Automated Welfare System (SAWS) consortia,

consumers, and other affected stakeholder groups, shall conduct a stakeholder planning workgroup to develop a joint renewal and recertification form to be used by individuals and families who are recipients of one or more of the Medi-Cal, Food Stamp, or CalWORKs benefits programs. The workgroup shall include consumer advocates with expertise in each of the Medi-Cal, Food Stamp, and CalWORKs programs.

(b) The stakeholder planning workgroup shall develop the joint renewal and recertification form, and any related policies and procedures, *to be considered* for adoption by the department, the counties, the State Department of Social Services, and the SAWS consortia, ~~no later than July 1, 2014~~. In developing the form, policies, and procedures the stakeholder planning workgroup shall do all of the following:

(1) Determine which questions and documentation requests on existing renewal and recertification forms are necessary and eliminate any requests for information or documentation that are duplicative.

(2) Develop the joint renewal and recertification form to allow recipients to skip sections on the form if they are not enrolled in, or do not want to be evaluated for, one or more of the benefit programs.

(3) Develop the forms, policies, and procedures to be used for both paper and electronic renewal and recertification.

(4) Maximize use of shared technology and information to minimize burdens on recipients and county eligibility staff, and assist families in a consumer friendly renewal and recertification process.

(5) Align renewal and recertification dates for recipients without requiring the recipients to lose any benefits earlier than they otherwise would have in the initial alignment year.

(6) Establish appropriate procedures and safeguards for data and information sharing pursuant to this section that meet the confidentiality and privacy requirements of the Medi-Cal, Food Stamp, and CalWORKs programs but do not require additional consent from the recipients.

(7) Give priority to the program changes necessary to enable the SAWS consortia to automate the renewal and recertification procedure, maximize the use of available information, and minimize manual workload.

1 (8) Ensure that recipients experience no disruption in coverage
2 or diminution of their rights under this chapter.

3 (9) Consider any additional modifications that could be made
4 to the renewal and recertification procedures to minimize burdens
5 on the recipients and encourage retention of Medi-Cal, Food Stamp,
6 and CalWORKs benefits. Additional modifications to be considered
7 shall include, but not be limited to, those permitted under federal
8 law, including those permitted through a waiver, such as electronic
9 and telephonic renewal methods, prepopulated forms, elimination
10 of interview requirements, and electronic verifications.

11 (10) Consider any changes that may be needed under federal
12 health reform, any guidance provided by the United States
13 Department of Agriculture, and any other changes that may be
14 needed in federal law or policy that would ensure a smooth
15 transition to the use of the joint renewal and recertification form.

16 ~~(e) The department, in consultation with the State Department~~
17 ~~of Social Services, shall obtain funding only from private sources~~
18 ~~to finance the stakeholder workgroup.~~

19 ~~(d) This section shall be implemented by all-county letters or~~
20 ~~similar instructions no later than January 1, 2012. After~~
21 ~~implementation by all-county letters or similar instructions, the~~
22 ~~department shall adopt comprehensive implementing regulations~~
23 ~~in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 3.5 (commencing~~
24 ~~with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the~~
25 ~~Government Code. Regulations shall be issued no later than July~~
26 ~~1, 2012.~~

27 *(c) The department, in consultation with the State Department*
28 *of Social Services, shall obtain funding from private or public*
29 *sources to finance the stakeholder planning workgroup, except*
30 *that no General Fund moneys shall be used for this purpose.*

31 ~~SEC. 2. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that~~
32 ~~this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to~~
33 ~~local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made~~
34 ~~pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division~~
35 ~~4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.~~